

Abstract

The thesis —French Communists and Poland in 1956|| deals with the relations between the Central European Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) or Poland and the West European French Communist Party (PCF) in the crisis year of 1956. Whereas the PZPR was a governing party in an Eastern block people's democracy, the PCF was in opposition, strong and influential, though, in a Western country. Analysing their mutual relations in 1956 is not only interesting from the point of view of East-West connections, but chiefly of the different approaches to Khrushchev's policy of destalinisation. Despite party factions vis-à-vis destalinisation, the main difference laid in both parties' leaderships. Whereas the PCF was more or less under the Stalinist Maurice Thorez's control, which prevented Khrushchev's French supporters from influencing their party's politics, in case of the PZPR, the death of Bolesław Bierut in March 1956 made room for larger variety of opinions within the party. That is why the PCF can be labelled as —more Stalinist|| than the PZPR in 1956. This thesis describes not only the situation of both parties in 1956. It also analyses the images that the parties made about each other and the ways in which these images were spread and how they influenced the relations between them.

Keywords

French Communist Party, Poland, Polish United Workers' Party, destalinisation, Polish-French relations, press, Maurice Thorez, Władysław Gomułka